

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-6, 8, 10-17 and 19-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kerschner et al. (US 4,993,136). It is respectfully submitted, however, that these claims are now patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth below.

Kerschner discloses a vacuum test fixture. Upper structure 12 is connected to lower section 14 by upright member 16. As set forth in Kerschner at column 7, lines 42-46, rotation of upright support member 16 causes upper section 12 to move vertically towards and away from lower section 14. During operation, circuit board 11 is placed on belt 27. Belt 27 moves circuit board 11 into position between upper section 12 and lower section 14.

In contrast with Kerschner, Applicants' claim 1 relates to an apparatus for establishing a distance between a test head and a peripheral. Test heads are known in the art and are described in Applicants' originally-filed application at page 1, line 10 through page 5, line 10. Also, it is well known in the art that test heads are typically physically separated from a peripheral prior to docking.

Applicants' invention, as recited by claim 1, thus includes the feature of:

a frame which is coupled to one of said test head and said peripheral
and which is detachably coupled to the other of said test head and said peripheral....(emphasis added)

Thus, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the feature that the test head and the peripheral are detachable.

This is in sharp contrast with Kerschner where upper section 12 and lower section 4 are permanently connected to each other by upright member 16. In fact, the entire objective of including belt 27 is because upper section 12 cannot be detached from lower section 14. Thus, belt 27 is required in order to move printed circuit board 11 into place.

Again, this is completely different from a typical test head/peripheral configuration. Thus, claim 1 includes the feature of the frame "detachably coupled" to the other of the test head and the peripheral.

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Accordingly, Applicants' claim 1 is patentable over Kerschner.

Claim 12, while not identical to claim 1, is also patentable over Kerschner for reasons similar to those set forth above with regard to claim 1.

Claims 23 and 24 are newly added and are supported by the originally-filed application at page 8, lines 21 and 22. No new matter has been added. These claims recite features which are neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record. In addition, these claims are patentable by virtue of their dependency on allowable independent claims.

In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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